



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Joins Coalition Filing Brief to Protect Long-Term Liberian Residents of the United States *Brief Defends Deferred Enforced Departure for Families*

BALTIMORE, MD (August 2, 2019) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today joined a coalition of 15 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief in support of legal action to halt the Trump administration’s termination of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for thousands of Liberians who have been living, working, and raising their families in the United States for decades.

In the brief, filed in *African Communities Together v. Trump* in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, the states oppose the defendants’ motion to dismiss and argue to preserve DED for Liberians. DED is an immigration program authorized by the President to protect foreign nationals whose countries have experienced armed conflict, civil unrest, natural disasters, or public health crises. The states contend that terminating DED will inflict widespread harm on Liberian families and the communities in which they live and work.

“Our Liberian-born residents and their families—many of whom are U.S. citizens—contribute immeasurably to our society and economy,” said Attorney General Frosh. “We will continue to fight to ensure that people who have been here legally for decades, who have paid taxes, and contributed to society are not deported to a country experiencing some of the worst violence and public health crises in the world.”

Since the 1980s, Liberia has experienced a series of internal armed conflicts and the largest outbreak of the Ebola virus in history, killing and displacing thousands. Liberian nationals were first granted DED in 1999. As DED-holders, Liberians are not subject to immigration detention and removal and can legally reside and work in the United States. Many have lived in the United States for decades, building families, participating in the workforce, and contributing to their communities. The states argue that the attempt to abruptly terminate DED for these long-term residents of the United States would force them to return to dangerous conditions in Liberia.

Terminating DED for Liberians would also put at risk the welfare of thousands of children born to Liberian parents but raised in the United States. The brief argues that these children, who are U.S. citizens, are already suffering in fear of their parents’ removal from the country. Forced separation from a parent is a traumatic event that could result in these children losing not only a loving family and safe home, but also their economic stability and wellbeing.

The states also argue that Liberians make valuable contributions to the state economies. A large population of Liberians work in the health care and social assistance industries, filling a growing need for workers in these fields.

On March 27, 2019, Maryland [joined in filing](#) an amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs' motion to enjoin federal officials from taking action on the President's directive to end DED for Liberians on March 31. A hearing on that motion was scheduled for the next day, but on the day of the hearing, the President issued a new directive to extend DED protections through March 31, 2020. Among other points, today's brief argues that the President's power to extend the DED deadline does not eliminate Plaintiffs' harm or make the suit moot.

In addition to Maryland, today's brief was joined by attorneys general from California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.